

# City of St. Helens

## CITY COUNCIL

Work Session Minutes

February 3, 2016

**Members Present:** Doug Morten, Council President  
Keith Locke, Councilor  
Susan Conn, Councilor  
Ginny Carlson, Councilor

**Members Absent:** Randy Peterson, Mayor

**Staff Present:** John Walsh, City Administrator  
Jon Ellis, Finance Director  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder  
Margaret Jeffries, Library Director  
Terry Moss, Police Chief  
Neal Sheppard, Public Works Operations Director  
Sue Nelson, Public Works Engineering Director  
Aaron Kunders, WWTP Superintendent

<b>Others:</b>	Jim Huffman	Larry VanDolah	Nicole Thill
	Amanda Renner	Cheryl Young	Kyle Boggs
	Ed Burgmans	John Alder	

Council President Morten called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.



*Audio recording did not work the first five minutes of the meeting.*

### **Visitor Comments**

♦Larry Vandolah. The Police Department building is looking very delapidated. The City should consider going out for a levy.

*Audio recorder working now.*

♦Jim Huffman. He would like a special prosecutor appointed in one of his cases because he believes there is a conflict of interest.

### **Employee of the Year Award**

The City of St. Helens is pleased to announce that Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent Aaron Kunders has been named the 2015 Employee of the Year. The award was announced at the City's annual employee banquet on January 29, 2016.

Kunders was one of nine employees nominated by his peers for the award. In his nomination, Kunders was described as consistently providing a positive attitude despite work load demands and extensive working hours, displaying professionalism in his internal and external customer service skills, creating high morale among staff due to his leadership, and finding ways to reduce expenses and increase revenue, thereby benefiting the City's finances and the community as a whole.

Kunders was hired by the City of St. Helens in September 2000 as a Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator II. Since that time, he has been promoted several times as he acquired certifications. In June 2009, he was appointed as the Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent.

Congratulations, Aaron!

### **Semi-Annual Senior Center Report**

Cheryl Young, Center Manager, was in attendance to give the report which is included in the archive packet for this meeting.

Cheryl talked about their financial needs. They have not had to cut back services this year but don't know if they can continue as they are next year.

This coming Saturday at 1 p.m. there will be a memorial for members and people served by the Senior Center who passed away in 2015. Anyone is welcome to attend.

Council President Morten asked if Cheryl needs more advertising. Cheryl responded that they could use more. They are unable to afford newspaper advertising. Morten spoke of the KOHI City Talk segment on the third Friday of each month. He suggested she guest speak in March or April.

Cheryl added that they have a piece of property they need to sell in St. Helens. They will also hold a fundraiser for a diamond ring.

### **Request from St. Helens Boosters**

*Kyle Boggs, Boosters President, was in attendance to make the request to the Council.*

Each year they hold an auction and fundraiser dance at the fairgrounds. This year, it's on May 7. He is requesting a donation for their auction fundraiser. A couple ideas they have are 1) reduction to a utility bill or 2) the cost to rent a park.

Their main fundraising goal right now is to replace the tennis courts at the high school. They hope to break ground on that project this summer.

### **Overview of Five-Year Financial Forecast**

Finance Director Ellis reviewed his overview of the five-year financial forecast. The biggest impact will be the PERS increase in FY17-18. He will not be recommending any staffing additions to the budget this year.

Councilor Locke asked if there will be additional funds available for the police department. Ellis responded that there will not be unless they find an additional funding source, such as a levy.

### **Presentation of City Employee Raffle Fundraiser Money to Rotary Club of Columbia County**

The City of St. Helens held their annual employee appreciation/banquet on January 29. The City Management Team each donated \$25 toward raffle prizes with the proceeds from the raffle ticket sales going to the Rotary Club of Columbia County. Rotary plans to use the money for a special needs playground project in St. Helens. The raffle, along with other donations, raised \$695. Rotary President and St. Helens Police Chief Terry Moss accepted the money.

### **Update on New Phone System**

City Administrator Walsh reviewed the results of the phone evaluation. Inflow submitted a bid outside of the RFP process and they came in with the lowest quote. Centerlogic has had good experiences with them in the past. Demonstrations were held for staff and they were pleased with the product. It is within the budget.

No objections from the Council to move forward.

### **Update from Event Coordinator Tina Curry**

Tina reported that she has been focused on gathering information for the proposed stage that was discussed at the last work session. She gave a proposed rendering to Walsh. Naming and renting the stage would help fund it, as well bring in additional tourism.

After talking to local business owners and residents about 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Tina thinks it's possible to have fireworks and entertainment. Funding will come from fundraising and City sponsorship. Do we want to do a 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration on Saturday or Monday? It was the consensus of the Council to celebrate on Monday. Tina proposes to perform the fireworks on the Boise Veneer property. It would be more convenient and reduce expenses. Councilor Conn expressed her reluctance to change too many traditions.

Tina would like to use available funds to coordinate events and a modest fireworks show. Any additional funds raised will allow them to add to it.

Council President Morten feels that if you can raise the funds for fireworks then proceed but if the funds cannot be raised then it should not happen. Tax payer dollars should not pay for fireworks. Councilors Conn and Carlson agreed that it needs to be supported by the community. It is not a function of government.

Tina said there are businesses that will help with fundraising. Does the Council want her to begin that process? Council agreed to proceed. At a minimum, activities can be organized in the park and depending on how much money is raised, there will be fireworks as well.

Tina talked about the Spirit of Halloweentown carts they will be manufacturing to look similar to the ones from the movie. They will be placed around the square. Those carts could be used on 4<sup>th</sup> of July as well.

Councilor Locke suggested marking space on the Boise Veneer property for people to park and watch the fireworks. Council agreed that was a good idea.

### **Department Reports**

**Police Chief Moss** reported...

- Two candidates have successfully completed their background investigations. They are taking care of their psychological and medical evaluations this week. He hopes to have start dates for them by next week.
- The Reserve Academy began last night. Sergeant Joe Hogue is leading it for the third year in a row. It will continue through spring.
- Putting on his Rotary hat, thank you to the Council and all the City employees who participated in the banquet Friday night. It was a lot of fun. They made a lot of money for the playground project.

**Public Works Engineering Director Nelson** reported...

- Update on the sewer lateral abatement project. The contractor began working this week.

There are 11 properties that need to be either capped or have the sewer line repaired. Two property owners have come to us saying they already did the work or are in the process of doing it, after the City already pulled the permits and began the work. However, we have to follow through with the legal process.

**Public Works Operations Director Sheppard** reported...

- A person has been selected for the Utility Worker I position. They are in the background process now.
- They are in the process of reviewing the Building Maintenance Utility Worker applications now.
- The crew is putting in two new catch basins for the storm system to alleviate water runoff on N. Vernonia Road.

**Library Director Jeffries** reported...

- The Friends of the St. Helens Public Library have their first annual recycled book art show on display at the Library. There are 16 pieces from 13 different artists.
- We are hosting author Maggie Stucke on February 18 at 7 p.m. She has written a book called Soup Night. It is a combination of soup recipes and a prescription to build a community around neighbors having soup nights.

**Finance Director Ellis** reported...

- There were two recent internal recruitment positions. Jennifer Johnson was selected for the Accounting Assistant position and Riki Frappier was selected for the Municipal Court Clerk position.
- The part-time Office Assistant position closed on Friday. They are reviewing 140 applications.
- We will be conducting an RFP for IT. He hopes to have it ready this month.

**City Recorder Payne** reported...

- Nothing to report.

**City Administrator Walsh** reported...

- There was a request earlier in the meeting for a pro-tem prosecutor. There is a process in place for a pro-tem judge but not a prosecutor. It was the consensus of the Council to allow the use of a pro-tem prosecutor in this case and create a process for the future.
- The Boosters Club requested a donation for their auction. There is Council funds available at their discretion. It was the consensus of the Council to donate up to \$200 on a water bill and \$40 on a park rental, coming out of Council discretionary funds.
- The first Waterfront Advisory Committee meeting is on February 10.
- The area-wide planning is moving forward.
- The Oregon Innovation application was submitted.

**Visitor Comment**

♦Ed Burgmans, Alternative Medical Consulting. He thanked the Council for moving forward with the cannabis industry. That shows the City is saying no to the black market. He has spoken with his business partners and would like to match dollar for dollar the first \$6,000 raised for fireworks.

**Council Reports**

**Council President Morten** reported...

- Nationwide, we are seeing the effects of decisions that have been made economically on behalf of city councils to try to save money but at the expense of their citizenship. As an

example, Flint, Michigan, has put their community at risk by trying to cut corners on their water supply. Our infrastructure is something that you can't see. We have a very effective sewer system with new laterals and a new trunk line in place. We are a healthy city with our waste disposal. Aaron obtaining Employee of the Year is very noteworthy. Our quarterly reports show that we have some of the best water in the nation. He understands that it's costly. However, we live in a very safe city in terms of infrastructure. Kudos to Public Works.

- He distributed a list of topics to discuss at the retreat. He would like Council to review and rank them in order today.

**Councilor Conn** reported...

- We started the process of interviewing for our Youth Librarian position. It's exhausting when there are several good candidates and you have to compare them.
- Arts & Cultural Commission is working hard on putting together a kick starter campaign to help fund the Gateway project phase II.

**Councilor Carlson** reported...

- Had a great time at the banquet on Friday night. She is impressed with how much money employees donated.
- Congratulations to Aaron Kunders!
- The City sponsored Bailee Crawford in Miss Teen Rodeo Oregon. Part of that package was two tickets to attend her dinner and benefit. Those tickets are available for anyone who wants to attend.

**Councilor Locke** reported...

- Thanked Chief Moss and staff for their hard work on the annual banquet. It was a good time.
- He serves on the Community Action Team board. Senator Wyden awarded the past two CEO's, Rocky Johnson and Jim Tierney, with US flags flown over the Capital in recognition of their accomplishments.
- Requested clarification on the City's cell phone policy. Do they use their own or the City's cell phones while working? City Recorder Payne explained that cell phones are not specifically addressed in the current personnel policies. They are working on it as part of the new personnel policies. Locke would like to see rules implemented.
- He received a recommendation from a couple staff members to put some RV parking along the creek on the new Boise property.
- We need to put some thought into the Columbia View Park stage. It has been received negatively by some of the public. He spoke about past concerts held in the park. The sound is terrible when there is a large band.

Council President Morten thanked the new marijuana coalition of business owners for stepping forward and donating matching funds up to \$6,000 for fireworks. It is extremely noteworthy.

### **Executive Session**

#### **ORS 192.660(2)(e) Real Property Transactions**

**Motion:** At 2:34 p.m., upon Locke's motion and Carlson's second, the Council unanimously voted to move into executive session under ORS 192.660(2)(e) Real Property Transactions.

**Motion:** At 3:03 p.m., upon completion of the executive session, Locke moved to go back into work session, seconded by Carlson, and unanimously approved.

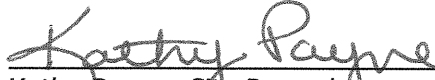
**Other Business**

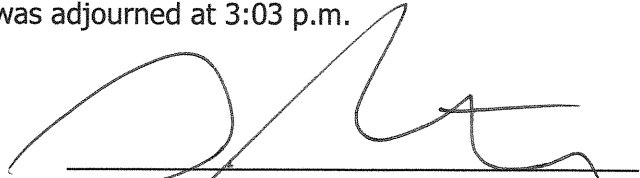
No other business.



There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:03 p.m.

ATTEST:

  
Kathy Payne, City Recorder

  
Doug Morten, Council President